

Hamilton County School District
Controlled Open Enrollment Plan

As part of a school district's or charter school's controlled open enrollment process, and in addition to the existing public school choice programs provided in s. 1002.20(6)(a), each district school board or charter school shall allow a parent from any school district in the state whose child is not subject to a current expulsion or suspension to enroll his or her child in and transport his or her child to any public school, including charter schools, that has not reached capacity in the district, subject to the maximum class size pursuant to s. 1003.03 and s. 1, Art. IX of the State Constitution.

Application

The application for controlled open enrollment can be obtained from the Hamilton County School District website or at one of the school sites for printing. Parents without computer access may seek assistance from the District Office or public library. Submitting an application does not guarantee that the student will be approved to transfer to the requested school. The application is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and submitted to the Director of Teaching and Learning Services, 5686 US Highway 129 South, Suite 1, Jasper, FL 32052, or via fax (386) 792-3681.

Preference will be given to the following applications when documentation is attached to the application:

- Dependent children of active duty military
- Students in foster care
- Student moved due to court-order change in custody due to separation or divorce, or serious illness or death of the custodial parent
- Homeless students

Declaring School Preference

Hamilton County will accept applications for grade spans (K-12) that have not reached 90% capacity. Grade spans that are open to Choice will be publicized primary through district web site including the following information:

- School program information
- Transportation information

Lottery

Once a grade span has reached 90% capacity it is reclassified as frozen to controlled open enrollment.

The remaining applications will be given a lottery number. The number is used to weigh the remaining applications should the capacity drop below 90%.

Appeals Process for Hardship Cases

Parents of students who applied during controlled open enrollment and were not approved for placement in a school of choice may request an appeal review based on a documented hardship situation within 3 days of receiving notice of denial. A written appeal describing the hardship must be submitted via facsimile or mail to the Director of Teaching and Learning Services. The appeal committee serves as the contact for appeal requests and coordinates the review of all hardship requests. The results of this appeal are considered final.

Hardships or statutory provisions may affect Choice transfers to schools in all status categories. These provisions include documented medical, emotional, psychological, and legal reasons:

- Availability of day care will not be considered as a basis for hardship beyond the elementary level.
- If a hardship appeal is submitted for medical reasons, including psychiatric, the parent or guardian must submit a Medical Hardship Documentation and Release of Records form, including a physician's statement describing the medical condition of the student and specific medical reasons justifying the request.
- If a hardship appeal is submitted for legal reasons, the parent or guardian must submit documentation of the legal hardship.

Transportation

The parent/guardian is responsible for the transportation of a student approved to attend a school of choice through the controlled open enrollment process.